



News Release from Congressman

ROB SIMMONS

SECOND DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

WWW.HOUSE.GOV/SIMMONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2006

CONTACT: JOHN GOODWIN
202/812-1341

SIMMONS MAKES EDUCATION HONOR ROLL

Eastern Connecticut Lawmaker Earns "A" For His Pro-Education Record In 2005

National Education Association Gives Congressman Its Highest Grade

NORWICH - Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, has earned top honors for his pro-education record from the National Education Association (NEA) - the nation's largest and most respected teachers association. Simmons scored a grade of "A" - the NEA's highest legislative honor.

"As a former teaching assistant at UCONN, and the husband of a school teacher, I know our public schools and universities are the cornerstone of Connecticut's education system. That's why I have put forth a strong pro-education voting record in Congress," Simmons said. "I am very proud of my 'A' grade from the National Education Association and look forward to continuing to represent Connecticut's educators, students and families in Washington."

The NEA Congressional Report Card measures members of Congress' support for public education and educators. NEA grades range from "A" to "F" and based on their voting records on selected votes and on five additional criteria:

- Cosponsorship of bills critical to advancing NEA's identified legislative priorities;
- Behind the scenes work to advance or impede NEA priority issues;
- Work on certain key committees in support of or against NEA priorities;
- Accessibility of the Member and staff in Washington, DC to NEA staff and leaders; and
- Accessibility and education advocacy in the Member's home state or district.

In 2005, Simmons voted 100 percent with the NEA and supported their priority issues, including:

- Cosponsoring legislation that makes important improvements to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law.
- Voting against annual spending bills opposed by the NEA which under-fund important federal education programs.
- Voting to increase Title I funding to schools with low-income students by \$5.8 billion - from \$8.8 billion to \$14.6 billion, including \$23 million more for Connecticut
- Voting to nearly double funding for the Individual with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) - from \$6 billion to more than \$11.8 billion, while fighting in Congress to ensure IDEA receives its full federal share by 2011.
- Voting three times against private school vouchers.
- Leading the charge in Congress to allow students and graduates to refinance their student loans, while securing more than \$42 million for UCONN.
- Voting for the law allowing any K-12 teacher to deduct up to \$250 annually for out-of-pocket classroom expenses and voting to more than triple the amount of student loan forgiveness available to highly qualified math, science, and special education teachers, as well as reading specialists, who commit to teaching.

###